GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
OCEAN DEVELOPMENT
LOK SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:1982
ANSWERED ON:16.03.2005
NEW RESEARCH STATION AT ANTARCTICA
Appadurai Shri M.

Will the Minister of OCEAN DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government proposes to set up a new research station in Antarctica;

(b) the number of scientists working in research stations at present;

(c) whether there have been casualties due to extreme weather conditions since 1981;

(d) if so, the year wise details thereof

(e) the yearly budget of the research stations in Antarctica;

(f) whether the Government proposes to increase the budget and number of scientists at these stations; and

(g) if so, the details thereof?

Answer

MINISTER OF STATE (INDEPENDENT CHARGE) OF THE MINISTRY OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY AND MINISTER OF STATE (INDEPENDENT CHARGE) OF THE DEPARTMENT OF OCEAN DEVELOPMENT (KAPIL SIBAL)

(a) Yes Sir. The department has selected a site near latitude 69Âº South and longitude 76Âº East. Detailed surveys on environmental parameters as mandated under the Environmental Protocol of the Antarctic Treaty and also from logistics and scientific considerations, are being carried out.

(b) Seventy nine scientists and logistics personnel are presently at the Indian Research Station `Maitri` in Antarctica. These include fifty four scientists including three from Malaysia (29 summer team members + 25 winter team members) of 24th Expedition and twenty five persons of wintering team of the 23rd Expedition.

(c) & (d) No, Sir.

(e) The present annual expenditure for the maintenance of research station is about Rs.4.00 crores.

(f)&(g) Yes, Sir. The budget allocation for Polar Science Programme for the year 2005-06 is Rs.41.00 crore as against the current year allocation of Rs.24.00 crores. This is to strengthen the research and logistics facilities at the Maitri Station, so as to accommodate more scientists.